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SATURDAY
AUGUST 21, 1954

About five o'clock this morning Tommy and Art came to my room, where the former recounted his interview with Mendès, which is set forth in an abbreviated form as follows:

"FROM BRUSSELS.

"ACTION: PARIS 65, AUGUST 21, 7 p.m.
WASHINGTON 166

"PRIORITY.

"NIACT SENT DEPT 166 PRTY PARIS 65.

"PARIS FOR DILLON.

"LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY.

"FROM BRUCE.

"Reference DEPTEL to Brussels 185, August 20.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY CFC DATE 7-1-81
☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☑ RELEASABLE☑
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

"Memorandum of conversation in DEPTEL 185 to Brussels was delivered to De Margerie to give to Mendès-France last night. When ministers' meeting broke up at 1 o'clock, Mendès asked to see Tomlinson at once. Mendès appeared to be very shaken by fact that the Secretary's views were not in accord with conversation (as reported to him). He showed Tomlinson cable he had received to demonstrate this. Mendès asked that following comment be sent to the Secretary:

"1. Mendès had never said to André Meyer that he thought United States or any United States official was instigating opposition to his plans at Brussels Conference. He said he had never said such a thing to any one nor had he ever held such a thought.

"2. Mendès said he would assume responsibility for statement at conference to effect that he thought United States would be delighted to support any agreement that could be reached at Brussels. He said that he knew US position was against any agreement which would require other nations to go back to their parliaments

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and said he had no objection to having other delegations unde[illegible]and US position had not changed if we thought his remarks had raised any doubts.

"3. Mendès was very upset by Secretary's reference to 'a new meeting with Soviet Russia'. He had hoped that his many explanations on this point had been understood and that actual proposals of French delegation in London had eliminated all suspicion as to his intentions. He went through previous explanation of why he must make some statement in French Assembly. This time he added reference to impossibility of actually holding any talks during period of elections in United States.

"4. Mendès said he was even more upset by the Secretary's comment 'that what he was doing was merely a repetition of futile past'. He then said he would keep his word and give us a response for France before the parliamentary vacation. He said that, if Brussels conference failed, he would not guarantee that response would be given by French parliament, because he might have to take the responsibility himself as chief of government. He said he was hurt by tone of distrust and that he thought US could give him its confidence for a few weeks longer after having been patient so long with procrastination of previous governments on this issue. He then gave his oft-repeated explanation of how he had obtained date for debate and so on.

"Mendès then asked Tomlinson to remain and talk on personal basis about his policy, including above points, and progress of Brussels conference. Conversation lasted about 2 hours. Today Mendès asked me to call on him. He went over much the same ground. I am reporting high points of these conversations separately. SPROUSE."

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"FROM: BRUSSELS.

"ACTION: PARIS 68 AUGUST 22, 5 PM

"NIACT.

"NIACT SENT PARIS 68 DEPT 169 RPTD INFO LONDON 37 BONN 35.

"PARIS EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR DILLON; LONDON EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR: BONN EYES ONLY CONANT.

"LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY.

"FROM TOMLINSON.

"Re EMBTEL 166.

"After Mendès-France had finished with his comments on the Secretary's memorandum, Mendès asked me to stay to discuss situation on personal basis even though the hour was then 2 o'clock in the morning and his delegation, including Faure and Bourgès-Maunoury, were waiting for him in next room. Mendès said that as a friend he wished my full and frank views. He said he was thinking more of future than of present because Brussels Conference had already failed. Meeting would be held tomorrow but continued discussions seemed pointless. Mendès insisted over and over again that fault was not his, listing examples in effort to show that other ministers had not given him 'one single' concession.

"I said that I did not believe that attitude of other delegations justified writing off conference as failure. Each of EDC partners and US and UK as well seemed to be prepared to do best they could in answer to French appeal for help with French Assembly. They were asking only that French Government recognize that there was a limit to their possible help. Other ministers could not risk creating political difficulties in their own countries. In some cases, even their personal careers would be placed in jeopardy by this questionable gamble. It seemed (rpt seemed) clear to me that, if EDC governments agreed to reopen

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parliamentary debates on EDC, it would be 18 months or 2 years before rest would have answer on European unity and German reammament. No one could say these parliaments were to be limited to purely rubber stamp action taking not more than 3 months. In my opinion, it was a contradiction to argue that countries should go back to parliaments to help get quick action in France when resulting delay and doubt of new parliamentary consideration made defeat of EDC a near certainty. Mendès repeated argument that his jurists did not believe parliamentary action in other countries was necessary on protocol, but observed this was not his responsibility and was matter for other EDC countries to decide. He insisted that some way could be found to minimize any parliamentary action if other ministers would only appreciate magnitude of his problem and his efforts to overcome it.

"Mendès said facts of political difficulties in France had to be faced. He had to have essentials of protocol for passage in French Assembly. He had to try to obtain 80 anti-EDC votes on right because Socialist deputies would not follow discipline. He explained his 'pointage' on basis of signature by 49 Socialist Deputies in last two weeks of a promise to vote against EDC. Perhaps he had been wrong, he had received some promises from anti-EDC deputies but not enough, although he expected others to change position if there were a success in Brussels. Mendès admitted he had not consulted Mollet on his 'pointage'.

"I said it could be expected that Mollet would hold back his real disciplinary campaign until EDC debate was in progress. Socialist Deputies might act quite differently at that time. I pointed out that his 'pointage' could not be expected to overcome scepticism of other governments. Everyone seemed to have 'pointage' and they differed widely depending upon assumptions used in preparing them. Pro-EDC deputies had always urged immediate debate and tactics of anti-EDC

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deputies had been to postpone it. I continued that a 'pointage' prepared by pro-Europeans might promise more favorable results.

"Mendès insisted that he could count on all pro-European votes despite statements made by Schuman, Pinay, Mollet, Phillip and their followers. With astonishing cynicism he said they had no alternative but to vote for EDC Treaty even if protocol left nothing but a skeleton of EDC treaty. Mendès stated that Bourgès-Maunoury and René Mayer agreed with his gloomy analysis of prospects for EDC Treaty and with his conviction that EDC could not be ratified unless protocol was obtained at Brussels.

"I said that I did not wish to speak for these gentlemen but understood their position to be that EDC treaty could be ratified if it were presented vigorously to Assembly along with government endorsement of maximum that was acceptable to other EDC countries at Brussels. I said that I also understood their views on vote-catching possibilities of protocol in its present form to be quite different from his.

"Mendès repeatedly stated that time was too short to work out anything useful to him in Brussels. Spaak's proposed declaration would be interpreted as merely empty promises. I replied that a formal signature of 6 governments to act in common in future should have real value. French Government should extend same confidence to other governments that it was asking for itself. I continued that, if it was too late to act, I thought it fair to attribute situation to excessive unreasonableness of French protocol and to continued French insistence that other parliaments must take new action on EDC Treaty. There was still a real hope, in my opinion, for a settlement very useful for French Govt before its parliament if these unreasonable positions could be quickly changed. Problem as I saw it was to undo damage done by anti-EDC advisers who had been asked to help on

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protocol veto provision. I replied that I was under a different impression as to position of Bourgès-Maunoury on protocol, and assumed that Bourgès would make his position clear if it were necessary to do so next week.

"Mendès said he had two immediate points for the future. First, he thought a common five-nation declaration trying to put blame for failure of Brussels conference and EDC on France would only cause disunity and bitterness between western nations. Such division could only help Russians.

"Second, he was going to visit Churchill and he hoped US would be represented so that three nations could map new plans for European policy and limit damage for failure of EDC.

"I replied that western nations were not divided. They were all firmly united in fulfilling agreed objectives except France. Failure of Brussels conference could only reflect this situation of isolation of France and of inability of France to deal with her own problem. On second point, I said I thought it inconceivable that Germany and other EDC nations could be left to stand aside and have France pretend to leadership on continent after history of past three years on fulfillment of commitments on European policy.

"Mendès said he had not decided on course to take next week. He had to consult his cabinet Tuesday. One possibility was to present EDC Treaty with whatever he could get at Brussels; second possibility was to present treaty without vote of confidence; third possibility was to take responsibility himself as head of government and turn down EDC Treaty; fourth possibility was to agree with US and UK and try to obtain Assembly approval to put Bonn conventions in effect; and there were others. Mendès said he was so concerned with damage to Atlantic solidarity by rejection of EDC Treaty by French Assembly that he was seriously considering taking responsibility for rejection himself as head of government.

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"I pointed out that, if French Assembly did not vote on EDC Treaty after asking and receiving maximum help other EDC countries could give at Brussels, it could certainly be said that Mendès-France government had added to 'futile history of past'. I said that France had taken international commitment to present EDC Treaty to Assembly. France could not expect to be excused from this commitment just because Mendès-France had come to power any more than other countries could expect to be excused from their commitments to France because of this event. If answer in French Assembly had to be no, then it seemed better to obtain that answer clearly so that Atlantic policy could be built on some other basis even if it were far less acceptable. This morning Bourgès-Maunoury asked me to call on him. He said he had just finished long talk with Mendès-France on above conversation. Bourgès said he was sorry that conversation had not taken place night before. It had helped him clear up an equivocal situation. Mendès had told him that I had suggested he would resign. Bourgès said he replied that his intentions were to resign but that he was surprised that I was aware of it. Mendès appealed to him not to do so, urging that they must continue to work together and that resignation of Bourgès might lead to his own. Bourgès said Mendès still had not made definite decision on Brussels Conference and there was still some hope. In any case he was now not bound by delegation loyalty and could work more effectively. He urged that Chancellor agree to see Mendès as soon as possible. SPROUSE."

At half-past seven in the morning I received a call asking me to go and see Chancellor Adenauer at 9:00 o'clock at the Hotel Metropole. This I did, and talked to him, Hallstein and Ophuls. The Chancellor had derived, from his first impressions, an unfavorable estimate of Mendès, since he thought his arguments in favor of the French Protocol were meretricious and must be, in view of his

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reputation for intelligence, insincere. The old gentleman is philosophical about future events at the conference and announced his intention, after an almost sleepless night, of going to look at the architecture of Bruges.

From there, I repaired to the Foreign Office, after a short talk with Bill Stoneman and Blair Clark, who [redacted] waylaid me in the lobby of the Metropole.

Spaak was in good fettle, but not feeling kindly disposed toward Mendès' insistence upon the acceptance of his proposition.

I went back to the office, where Mr. Bech came to see me. He had refused to let me call upon him, since he said the Embassy was en route to his daughter's house, where she had put a succulent chicken on the side of the stove while he was delayed in talking to me. I had never before known Dr. Bech to speak so emphatically about the great political error which he felt was being committed at Brussels and which he ascribed entirely to Mendès' proposal. He said that, of course, it would empty the treaty of any substance, and the proposition could not possibly be seriously entertained by the others. Like Spaak, he considered it constituted an affront to the dignity of the Parliaments of the little countries, as well as to their Governments, since, in effect, it asked the re-submission to the ratifying nations of a document which had been solemnly approved by them. However, nothing can alter Dr. Bech's irrepressible good spirits. He regaled me with a galaxy of good stories and went off to his chicken.

I was not so happy. I had a call from Mr. Mendès-France asking me to step up the street to the French Embassy and converse with him at 1:15. This I did. Our conversation was friendly but, from my standpoint, most unsatisfactory. It is summarized in the following telegram:

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"FROM: BRUSSELS.

"ACTION: PARIS 64 August 21, 7 PM
WASHINGTON 165

"NIACT SENT DEPARTMENT 165 PRIORITY PARIS 64 REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 34 ROME 21 THE HAGUE 20 BONN 32 LUXEMBOURG 21.

"PRIORITY.

"PARIS EYES ONLY DILLON AND HUGHES.

"LONDON, ROME, THE HAGUE EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR.

"BONN EYES ONLY CONANT.

"LUXEMBOURG EYES ONLY MINISTER.

"LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY.

"FROM BRUCE.

"Saw separately this morning Adenauer Spaak, Bech and Mendès-France. Adenauer, Spaak and Bech still hopeful the five nation declaration will be finally accepted by Mendès. If not, and conference breaks down, they intend issue statement and also text rejected declaration. Possibility of such a statement is irritating and depressing to Mendès, who repeatedly said it would arouse bitterness in France and reflect on his government against partners and so that to defend French prestige he would have to retort.

"He has voiced this same objection, now almost become a plea, to Spaak, but Spaak and the others are thus far adamant, esteeming their position would be false if impression were allowed to be created that conference might have failed because of their unreasonable intransigeance rather than because totally unacceptable language French protocol requiring resubmission their Parliaments.

"Moreover they believe this resolution most effective one to date in attempt influence Mendès at least to moderate his insistence on their embracing his protocol.

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"In general my conversation with Mendès, consequent upon his invitation, too closely parallels report of Tomlinson visit to him late last night being reported separately and Alger's interview of yesterday (EMBTEL 158) to warrant recounting. My general impression is he was thoroughly fatigued, cynical, pessimistic, but fully confident of his own judgment of French parliamentary situation. Robert Schuman's article in FIGARO had not seemingly convinced him there would be any French pro-EDC defections if the other five ministers would accept his proposal almost in its entirety. He said he thought under such circumstances even Robert Schuman would vote for the changes as would all the pro-EDC socialists. (I feel he underestimates the depth of their convictions.)

"He described himself as the unlucky inheritor of his predecessors' gross errors and lack of good faith in carrying out their EDC engagements. He was being abandoned by his BENELUX allies, suspect by the United States, thrown unfairly on his own courage and resources when he sorely needed sympathy and aid, all because his foreign colleagues would not realize the form was nothing and the spirit of his proposal respondent to his political necessities was alone important. He asked for greater faith in him and in his intentions, and observed he was operating in a hostile atmosphere unjustified by his record.

"Mendès did not know what action he would take next week in Paris. He might put original text to vote without government endorsement (saying ruefully that his prestige will have been so diminished by his lack of success at conference it will matter little if he sponsors bill). At any rate, he will make no determination until he has consulted President Coty and his own Cabinet. Meanwhile he says his political enemies are licking their chops and organizing against him. He had heard this morning that certain members MRP were considering demanding from the floor vote on original text. (Additional color is lent to this by statement to

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me yesterday in Paris by intimate friend of Pinay that Pinay was seriously canvassing prospect of rallying or allying himself to movement to bring original text to vote.)

"Mendès expressed himself vigorously on the importance of orienting Germany to the west, of helping Adenauer remain dominant in FEDREP, of his abiding belief in the supreme importance of unity amongst the allies. He only hoped if he fell from office he could be succeeded by a French statesman possessing and implementing similar convictions. ALGER."

I next paid my respects to the Italians. I found Signor Piccioni, the Foreign Minister, at the Embassy with my friends Magistrati, Lombardo, and the Italian Ambassador.

After a night at the baize-covered tables, Signor Piccioni did not strike me as being the most alert of men. Also, the recent death of de Gasperi appears to have shaken him deeply. He is going off tomorrow morning to Rome so as to be present at the funeral on Monday. He said the present Treaty would have no difficulty in being ratified by the Italian Parliament later in the week, but that it would be impossible for him to present the changes in it advocated by Mendès. The Italian delegation prides itself on its violent and spirited defense of Article 38, which acceptance of the French Protocol would have eliminated. This is the Article dealing with a prospective European Political Community.

I tried to see Beyen but was not able to do so.

As was the case yesterday, I had long conversations with Sprouse and Alger at the Embassy. Alger handled himself well in his recent talk with Mendès-France, and is returning to the United States tonight, whence he had departed a couple of days ago to be present on this occasion.

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Phil invited Tommy, Art and myself to dinner at his attractive house in the suburbs. We feasted thoroughly on the best of food and wines, and were comforted in advance of the evening's inevitable combat.

About 11:00 o'clock we went as guests to Bob Rothschild's Chef de Cabinet bureau, next to the Conference Room in the Foreign Office, where we munched sandwiches and drank beer. Representatives of the various delegations were milling around outside and hordes of newspaper photographers were pacing the streets. From time to time a report came out of the conference chamber to the effect that [redacted] severe things were being said by the other Foreign Ministers to the obdurate Mendès-France.

A spate of unsolicited telegrams suddenly and unexpectedly began to flow via the Embassy to me. One contained messages currently passing between Messrs. Dulles and Churchill, another was a vigorous reassertion of American policy addressed to Spaak. A third was a personal message from the Secretary to Mendès-France. I exercised my discretion regarding the two latter ones by having them delivered while the oratory was flowing. From later reports, the one to Mendès did not sway him in the slightest, although Spaak was reported by de Staercke, who darted back and forth between our room and the conference, to have been encouraged by the message to himself.

About 1:30 or 2:00 o'clock the Ministers threw in their towels. A round of press conferences followed in which I was about the only individual in the Foreign Office precincts who did not have a message to impart.

We went back to the Embassy, where Mrs. Knapik and three code clerks, none of whom had had other than snatches of sleep for the last 72 hours, again bent their efforts to transmitting to Washington reports of what was happening in Brussels.

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Earlier in the evening, we sent out the following telegram:

"FROM: BRUSSELS.

"ACTION: PARIS 63 August 21, 5 PM
WASHINGTON 163

"NIACT SENT DEPARTMENT 163 PARIS PRIORITY 63 REPEATED INFORMATION BONN 31 LONDON 33.

"PRIORITY.

"PARIS EYES ONLY DILLON AND HUGHES.

"BONN EYES ONLY CONANT.

"LONDON EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR.

"LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY.

"Department attention Secretary.

"FROM BRUCE.

"Reference EMBTEL 160 and Secretary's message 1050 to London.

"Believe it would be most unwise for United States to accept suggestion of Mendès-France that a representative of United States take part in scheduled conversation with Churchill.

"If Churchill mentions 'variant of NATO' to Mendès, Mendès would use this for his domestic political purposes to great and perhaps fatal disadvantage of EDC which he assured me as lately as this afternoon he still hopes to bring to a vote on appointed date regardless of decisions reached at Brussels conference. He probably expects to obtain immediate commitment from US and UK to talks for formulation new European policy assuming failure of French Assembly to ratify. This is exactly what Chancellor predicted Mendès would do if Brussels conference did not capitulate to French demands. Chancellor said that, if United States and United Kingdom agreed to this 3-power approach, confidence of other European nations in US and UK would be gravely shaken and such a step coul[illegible]terpreted

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as a sharp and damaging rebuff to him.

"If Brussels conference should fail and Mendès should refuse to proceed with ratification, I believe we should proceed at once at Spaak's invitation to holding 4-power talks of nations having ratified EDC with US and UK attending as observers. ALGER."

Following are the texts of the messages received earlier today from Dulles to Spaak and from Dulles to Mendès-France:

"FROM: WASHINGTON.

"ACTION: BRUSSELS.

"INFO: PARIS 654 August 21, 4 pm.

"NIACT SENT BRUSSELS 194 RPTD INFO LUXEMBOURG 25 ROME 600 THE HAGUE 269 BONN 496 NIACT LONDON 1039 PARIS 654.

"NIACT.

"LIMITED DISTRIBUTION.

"BRUSSELS FOR BRUCE.

"If you believe it would be helpful, please transmit following personal message from Secretary to Spaak:

"'I have been following with the closest interest the developments at the Brussels conference, which is so crucial to all our efforts to build strength and unity in Europe. I have noted with particular appreciation your skillful and patient efforts to bring about agreement under the most difficult conditions.

"'It is my most earnest hope that the conference will reach agreement on a formula which all participants can freely accept. However, I also feel that we must be prepared to deal urgently with the serious situation which would arise if, in spite of every effort, the conference failed to reach agreement. I am sure you will recall our luncheon conversation at Geneva at which we discussed the

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possibility of a meeting under Article 132 of the EDC treaty, with the U.S. and U.K. in attendance, along with the ratifying countries. I feel that the failure of the Brussels meeting would be a matter of such grave consequence as to make such a meeting necessary.

"If you agree and if in your judgment circumstances at Brussels make it desirable, I for my part would not object to your informing the Ministers at Brussels that you propose calling a meeting immediately, to be attended by the BENELUX countries, Germany, the U.S. and the U.K. I believe it should be made clear that the purpose of this meeting will be to consider with urgency how best to associate Germany in sovereign equality with the West and to bring about German rearmament. U.S. would be willing to accept an invitation on assumption U.K. would do likewise."

"Embassy London should transmit copy foregoing to Churchill under cover personal message contained separate telegram as soon as Bruce gives notification he has delivered message to Spaak. DULLES."

"FROM: WASHINGTON.

"ACTION: BRUSSELS NIACT.

"INFO: PARIS NIACT 655, August 21, 4 PM.

"NIACT SENT BRUSSELS 195 LONDON 1040 RPTD INFO ROME 601 THE HAGUE 270 LUXEMBOURG 26 BONN 497 NIACT PARIS 655.

"NIACT.

"LIMITED DISTRIBUTION.

"BRUSSELS FOR BRUCE.

"If you believe it would be helpful, transmit following personal message from Secretary to Mendès-France:

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"'1. I am deeply disturbed at the report I have received of the difficulties being encountered at the Brussels meeting and I conceive it my solemn duty to address this appeal to you and your fellow conferees.

"'2. I need not recount the vicissitudes which we have faced in common during the post-war in our efforts to assure an enduring peace in Western Europe in the face of an external threat of formidable proportions; nor in our efforts to achieve stability with the memories still unfortunately vivid of the internecine strife which has threatened the survival of the cradle of our civilization twice in this century. Now all that we have worked for stands in a very real and immediate sense at the crossroads. The decision is between resolutely choosing the path of statesmanship or that leading toward disunity and chaos.

"'3. There is, I know, no question in our minds as to which road we must choose. Our problem is how we can all get on this road together.

"'4. The grave problems which are presently facing France and her partners at Brussels are primarily and in the first instance their own concern. We must therefore accept the judgment of the Brussels Conference on any points unanimously and willingly agreed. In achieving such a meeting of the minds, however, there are certain considerations which must be borne in mind:

"'A. Any changes in the EDC Treaty which would result in further unacceptable delay, such as would result from resubmission to parliaments, should be avoided.

"'B. Any changes in the EDC Treaty which seriously impair or indefinitely postpone its supranational and integrative features strike at the basic concept of European unity, which in my judgment is the best and last hope of Europe, and should therefore be avoided.

"'C. Any changes in the EDC Treaty which discriminate against any of its participants sow the seeds of resentment and breed future peril and should

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likewise be avoided.

"15. In addition, I must recall the various engagements which my government stands ready to assume at such time as the EDC comes into effect. We must, of course, review, in the light of changes, whether these undertakings remain justified.

"16. If the Brussels Conference breaks up with no agreement, we shall be faced with a great crisis. Our disposition would be, first, to consult immediately with the UK and those EDC countries which have ratified the treaty to determine urgently what steps should be taken to associate Germany in sovereign equality with the West and to bring about German rearmament.

"17. I have felt this message necessary in order that there be no doubt as to the vital importance we place on the EDC in its essential features and on the need, in all our interests, for its coming into force with the very minimum of further delay.

"18. Since I believe that the other EDC powers and the British should know clearly where the US stands on these problems, I am making the preceding paragraphs of this message available to them.'

"If no objection perceived Bruce, make indicated paragraphs available other EDC Foreign Ministers. Embassy London should transmit urgently under cover personal message contained in separate telegram to Churchill upon receipt word from Bruce of delivery by him to Mendès-France. DULLES."

About 5:00 o'clock, when we went to bed, it looked as if the show was more or less over.

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In my report to the Department I thought it unnecessary to repeat or describe some of the interchanges that had taken place during my conversation with Mendès.

I had scarcely proffered politenesses before he launched upon a description of his unenviable position and the repercussions certain to follow in Paris. I attempted to elicit from him an expression of his personal sentiments on the desirability, or contra, of European integration even as a general proposition, but he brushed this impatiently aside and spoke vehemently of his domestic political difficulties. I reminded him of a previous conversation in which we had agreed that the reconstitution of a German National Army and General Staff, with the almost inevitable concomitant of the immediate and complete grant of sovereignty to the Federal Republic, would be highly dangerous. Yet, if EDC failed, such a proposal would appear to be the most likely and practicable alternative presented. He replied it would be the fault of the other Foreign Ministers in not accepting his protocol if this came to pass. I spoke of the deep convictions of President Eisenhower on the desirability of institutions of a federal nature on the Continent, and the processes of reasoning that had induced the President to give whole-hearted support to EDC. I tried, with the best eloquence I could summon to the cause, to explain to him the store set by the American people generally on European integration projects, and how these appealed irresistibly to the idealism as well as the selfish security instincts of our people, acutely aware, from participation in ~~two world wars, of the menace of German~~ militarism. I might as well have been addressing myself to a stone. I went on to talk of the chance offered ~~through this means for Fra~~

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sustain for fifty years a great power position within the Atlantic Alliance, etc., but, as before, I might as well have whistled in the wind.

Mendès sat impassively while I tried to develop other arguments that seemed to me persuasive in the light of the true interests of France. I have seldom had the same sense of the futility of conversation. His answer was a digression into the difficulty of governing his country. The only glimmer of humor was when he had brushed aside Mr. Schuman's letter as not important if the other Ministers would accept his protocol, because, regardless of what Schuman or any of the other pro-EDC supporters had said, they would vote for his proposal. I replied: "I cannot believe that Mr. Schuman is not a man of complete fidelity to his pro-European principles, and I would stake my life he would not betray them." "My friend," Mendès observed, "evidently you hold your life of little account."

His utter cynicism regarding not only Schuman but all French parliamentarians was, I must confess, somewhat of a shock to me. I hope he is not correct in his diagnosis of their characters, for some of his statements seemed to indicate a total and settled disbelief in his fellow politicians ever being actuated by any but the most sordid motives. If he is correct, there is a sorry prospect ahead for those of us who value France as an ally.

Mendès is [redacted] evidently a man of considerable talent, but my own feeling, certainly at this time, is that he fatally lacks certain elements of character essential to greatness. I believe his word can be trusted, but not his judgment. Very evidently, magnanimity to opponents ~~or those he dislikes it not to be expected~~ of him. He is nationalistic in a short-sighted way, eloquent in statement but unsympathetic in manner, a man to be reckoned with ~~but not necessarily to be~~ counted upon.

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SECRET